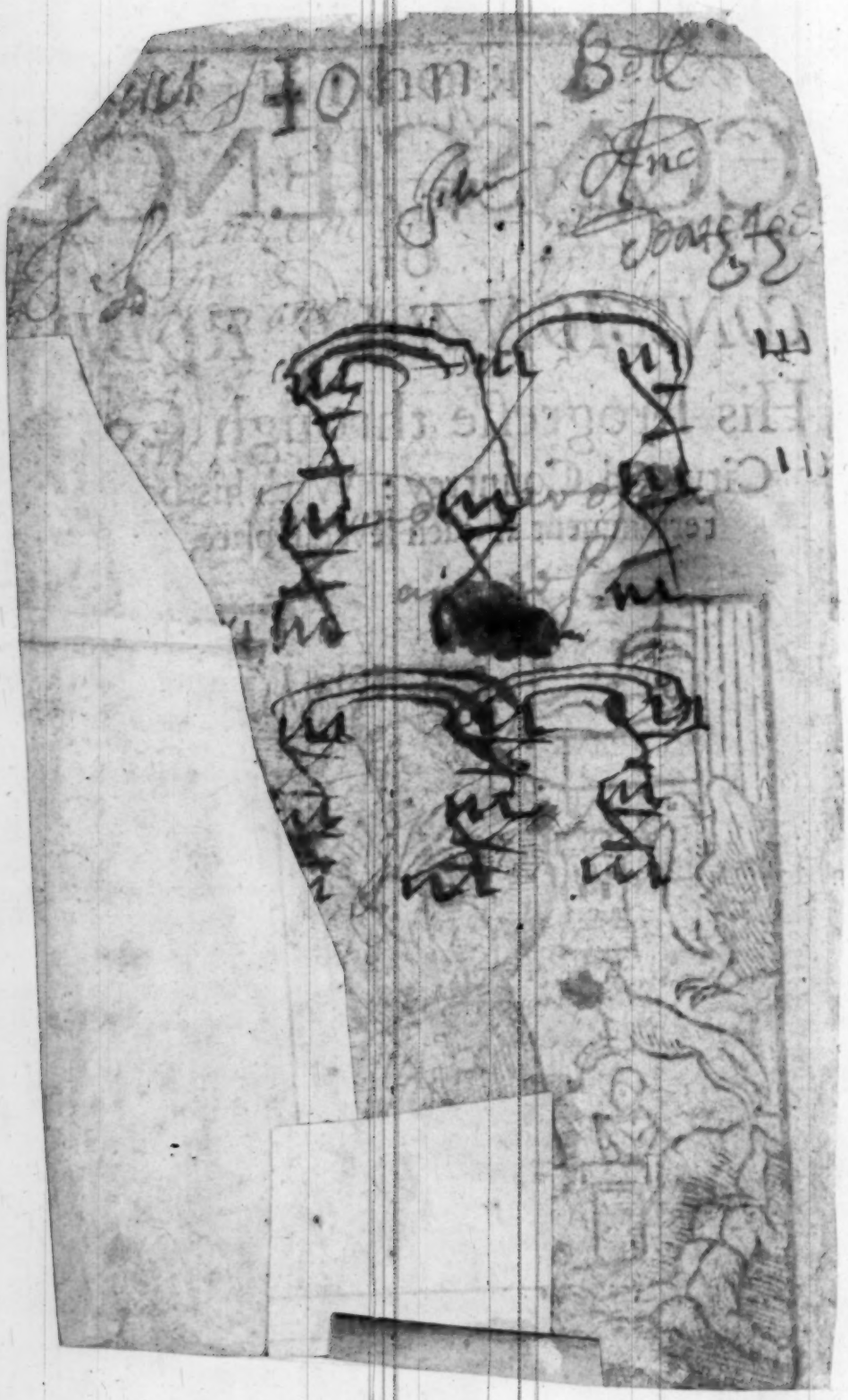
ROBIN

CONSCIENCE,

Or,

CONSCIONABLE ROBIN:

His Progreſſe through Court,
City and Countrey: With his bad
tertainment at each ſeverall place, &



ROBIN CONSCIENCE:

His Progresse through the Court, City, and Countrey.

I Have bin quite through England wide,
With many a faint and weary stride,
To see what people there abide,
That loves me.
Poore Robin Conscience is my name,
Sore vexed with reproach and blame,
For all where ever yet I came
Receive me.
Few now endure my presence here,
I shall be banisht quite I feare,
I am despised every where,
And scorned.
Yet 'tis my Fortune now and then
To meet some good woman or man,
Who have (when they my woes did scan)
Sore mourned.
To think that Conscience is despised,
Which ought to be most highly prized:
This trick the Divell hath devised
To blind men.
'Cause Conscience tells them of their waies,
Which are so wicked now a dayes,
They stop their eares to what he sayes,
unkind men.
I first of all went to the Court,
Where Lords and Ladies did resort,
My intertainment there was short,

As ſoone as ere my name they heard,
They ran away full ſore afraid,
And thought ſome Goblin had appear'd
from hell come.
Conſcience quoth one, be gone with ſpeed,
The Court few of thy name doth breed,
Wee of thy preſence have no need:
be walking.
Thou tel'ſt us of our pride and luſt
Which ſpite of thee we follow muſt:
So out of Court was Conſcience thruſt,
no talking.
Thus bandyt from the Court I went
To Weſtminſter incontinent,
Where I (alas) was ſorely ſhent
for comming,
The Lawyers did againſt me plead,
It was no great matter ſome there ſaid,
If Conſcience quite were knockt th'y head,
then running
From them I fled with winged haſte
(They did ſo threaten me to baſte,)
Thought it was vaine my breath to waſte
in Counſell.
For Lawyers cannot me abide,
Becauſe for falſhood I them chide,
And he that holds not on their ſide,
muſt down ſtill.
Unto the City hyed I then,
To try what welcome there Trades-men
Would give poor Robin Conſcience, when
I came there
The ſhop keepers that uſe deceit
Did come about me and did threat,
Unleſſe I would be gone, to beat
me lame there
And every one both high and low
Held Conſcience as mortall foe

Because he doth ill vices show
each minute:
Therefore the City in uproare
Against me rose, and me so tore
That I am resolv'd Ile never more
come in it.
On Friday I to Smithfield went
Where being come incontinent
The Horse coursers with one consent
did chide me:
They said that I was not my selfe
And said that I was a pinching elfe
And they could get more store of pelfe
besids me.
I told them of a cheating trick,
Which makes the Horses run and kick,
By putting in an Eale that's quick
i'th belly.
Another which they use full oft
To bears their lame Jades heads aloft:
And beat their buttocks till they're soft,
as Jelly.
I told them y their wealth would rot,
That they by cheating men thus got,
But they for this same tale would not
abide me,
And charg'd me quickly to be gone,
Quod they, of Conscience we use none,
Those whom I follow with my mone,
out-ride me.
From thence I kept into Long-lane,
Where many Brokers doe remaine,
To try how they would intertaine
pure Conscience,
But my name when I them told,
The women did begin to scold,
The men said they that word did hold

For Conſcience is ſo hard a word,
That ſcarce a Broker can afford
To read it, for his mouth is ſtor'd
with lying.
Ye knows not what this Conſcience means,
That is no cauſe unto his gaines,
Thus I was ſcorned for my paines,
all crying
Away with Conſcience from this Lane,
For wee his preſence do diſdaine,
They ſaid, if I came there againe,
among them,
They ſaid they'd bang me back and ſide,
Being menac'd thus away I hide:
Thus worldlings think that when I chide
I wrong them.
Among the Butchers then went I,
As ſoone as ere they did me ſpye,
They threatned me moſt ſpightfully
to kill me.
Quoth one, if Conſcience here ſhould dwell
Wee were not able to live well,
For could wee gaine by'th meat we ſell,
nor will wee
Be bound to follow Conſcience nice,
Which would confine us to a price,
Robin, be rul'd by my advice,
quoth he then,
And get thee to ſome other place,
Wee hate to look thee in the face,
Hearing this, from thence apace
did flye then.
To New gate market went I then,
Where Countrey-women, maids and men,
Were ſelling needfull things, and when
they ſaw me;
If me one Butter woman rattles.

Another comes and with her nailes,
did claw me.
The Bakers which stood in a row
Began to brawle at me also;
And charged me away to goe,
because I
Told them that they'd make lesser bread,
Did not the Law put them in dread,
Ther's some of them would wish them dead
might lawes dye.
Thus chid of them my way I took
Unto Pye corner, where a Cock
Glaunc't at me as the deele did looke
ore Lincolne.
Conscience, quoth he thou shouldst no wit
In comming to this place unfit.
Ile run thee thorow with a spit:
then think on
These words to thee which I have said
I cannot live well by my trade,
If I should still require thy aide
in selling,
Sometimes one joynt I must roast thrice;
Ere I can sell it at my price,
Then here's for thee (who art so nice)
no dwelling,
Perforce he drave me backwards still
Until I came unto Snow-hill,
The Sale-men there with voices shrill
fell on me:
I was so irksome to their sight
That they conjured me to flight,
Or else they swore (such was their spight)
they'd stone me.
At Turn-againe-Laine the Fish wives there
And wenches did so raile and sweare.
Quoth they no Conscience shall come here
[illegible]

Their Bodges which for half pecks goe,
They bowed at my head to throw:
No Conſcience they were bred to know
but prating.
Away thus feighted by those Scoulds,
To Fleet ſtreet ſtreight my love it holds
Where men whose tongues were made in moulds
of flattery,
Did cry what lack you Countrey man?
But ſeeing me away they ran,
As though the enemy had began
his battery:
One ſaid to others, Sir ill newes,
Here Conſcience comes us to abuſe,
Let us his preſence all refuſe
together,
And boldly ſtand againſt him all,
We nere had uſe of him, nor ſhall
He libs with us, what chance did call
him hither?
The Haberdaſhers that ſell hats,
Hit Robin Conſcience many pats,
And like a company of Cats,
they ſcracht him
Quoth they why com'ſt thou unto us?
We love not Conſcience ruffling thus,
They gave him words oppriobrious,
and matcht him.
The Mercers and Silke men alſo
That live in Pater-noſter-row
Their hate againſt poor Conſcience ſhew.
and when I
Came to that place, they all did ſet
On me cauſe I their gaine would let
Who will both ſwear and lye to get
one penny.
From thence unto Cheapſide I paſt,
[illegible] words in haſte I [illegible]

Out of the place I soone was chas'd,
Quoth one man,
Conscience, for thy presumption base,
Intruding to this golden place,
Thou death deserv'st, therefore apace
be gone man.
Dost think that we have so much gold
Before our eyes still to behold,
Will thus by Conscience be control'd
and curbed?
Oh no, poore fellow, haste away,
For if long in this place thou stay,
Thou shalt be (I le be bold to say)
disturbed.
From thence I turned down Bread-Street,
A Cheese monger I there did meet,
He hyed away with winged feet
to shun me.
How now quoth I, why run you so?
Quoth he, because I well doe know,
That thou art Conscience my old foe,
thou'st done me
Great wrong, whyle I made use of thee
And dealt with all men honestly,
A rich man I could never be;
but since then
I banish'd have thy company,
And us'd deceit with those that buy,
I thrive, and therefore Robin bid
thee hence then.
I left him with his bad intent
And into Fish-street straight I went,
Among those Lads who with that lent
wore all peare:
As soone as ere they me espied,
They all at once upon me cride,
And swore that Conscience should not guide

I ſeeing things thus ſeeming ſtrange,
That all men did from gwdneſſe range
Did hie me ſtraight to the Exchange,
a Merchant
Was ſo affrighted when I came,
But preſently he blusht for ſhame,
His countenance did ſhew the ſame
in ſearchant.
Quoth he friend Robin, what doſt thou
Here among us Merchants now,
Our buſineſſe will not us allow
to uſe thée.
For we have trafficke without thée
And thrive beſt if thou abſent be:
I for my part will utterly
refuſe thée.
I being thus abaſh'd below
Did walke up ſtairs where on a row
Brave ſhops of ware did make a ſhow
moſt ſumptuous.
But when the ſhop-folke me did ſpy
They drew their darke light inſtantly
And ſaid in comming there was I
preſumptuous.
The gallant Girles that there ſold knacks
Which Ladies and brave women lacks,
When they did ſee me they did ware
in choller.
Quoth they, we here knew Conſcience yet,
And if he comes our gains to let
We'll baniſh him he'll here not get
one Scholler.
I being jeered thus and ſcorned,
Went down the ſtaires, & ſorely mourned,
To think that I ſhould thus be turn'd
a begging.
To Gracious-ſtreet I went along,
Where dwell

That will deceive both old and young,
with cogging:
As Drapers, Poulterers, and such
Who thinke they never get too much
The word Conscience to them is Dutch,
or Spanish.
And harder too, for speech they'll learne
With all their heart to serve their turne:
But Conscience (when they him discerne)
they banish.
I seeing all the City given
To use deceit in spight of Heaven,
To leave their company I was driven
perforce then.
So over London-bridge in haste,
I hist and scoft of all men, past,
Then I to Southwark tooke at last,
my course then.
When I came there, I hop'd to find
Welcome according to my mind,
But they were rather more unkind
then London:
All sorts of men and women there,
Askt how I durst to them appeare,
And swore my presence they would cleare
abandon.
I being sore a thirst, did goe
Unto an Ale-house in the row,
Meaning a penny to bestow,
in strong Beere.
But cause I for a quart did call,
My hostis swore she'd bring me small
Or else I should have none at all,
thus wrong'd there,
I bad her on her Licence looke,
Oh sir, quoth she, you are mistooke,
I have my Lesson without booke,

If I my Licence should observe,
And not in any point to swerve,
Both I and mine alas would starve,
not surfet
In stead of the quart pot of Pewter,
All small sugs, and need no tutor:
A Quartridge give to the Geometer
most truely,
And he will see, and yet will be blind,
A knave made much on will be kinde;
If you be one, Sir tell your minde,
no truly.
No, no, quoth I, I am no Knave
No fellowship with such I have,
My name is Robin Conscience brave,
that wander
From place to place, in hope that some
Will as a servant give me roome:
But all abuse me where I come,
with slander.
Now when my hostesse heard me tell,
My name, she swore I should not dwell
With her, for I would make her sell
full measure.
She did conjure me to depart:
Hang Conscience, cries she, gives me art,
I have not got by a penny a quart
my treasure.
So out o'th doors I went with speed;
And glad shs was to be thus freed,
Of Conscience, that she might speed
in frothing
Into the Kings Bench I needs would go,
The Jayler did me backwards throw;
Quoth he, for Conscience here you know
is nothing
Through Black-man street I went where
Stood casting the[illegible]

There two or three bawdes against me rose
most lowdly,
And bad me get me hence apace,
Or else they'de claw me by the face:
They swore they scorn'd me and all grace
most proudly.
I walkt in S. Georges Field
Where roaring Rascalls I beheld
That all the yeare their hopes do build
on cheating:
They were close playing at nine pins.
I came and told them of their sins:
Then one among the rest begins,
intreating,
That I would not torment them so:
I told them that I would not goe:
Why then, quoth he, I let thee know,
we care not
And yet we'll banish thee perforce:
Then he began to swear and curse
And said, prat on till thou art hoarse
and spare not,
I left them in their wickednesse,
And went along in great distresse
Bewailing of my bad successe,
and spied
A windmill standing there hard by;
Towards the same then passed I,
But when the Miller did me spie
he cryed,
Away with Conscience I'le none such;
That smell with honesty so much,
I shal not quickly fill my hutch
by due tole.
I must from every bushel of meale,
A peck, if not three gallons steale,
Therefore with thee I will no deale

Then leaving City, skirts and all,
Where my welcome it was but ſmall,
I went to try what would befall
ith Countrey.
There thought I to be entertain'd:
But I was likewiſe there diſdain'd,
A long time bootleſſe I complain'd
toth' Gentry.
And yet no ſervice could I have,
Yet if I would have play'd the Knave
I might have had maintenance braves
among them.
Becauſe that I was Conſcience poore,
Alas they thruſt me out of doore,
For Conſcience many of them ſwore,
did wrong them.
Then went I to the Yeomanry,
And Farmers of the Countrey,
Deſiring them moſt heartily
to take me;
I told them I would ſell their corne,
Unto the poor: but they did turne
Me out of doores and with great ſcorne,
forſake me,
One ſaid he had no uſe of me,
To ſell his corne, for I quoth he
Muſt not be onely rul'd by thee
in ſelling.
If I ſhall Conſcience entertaine,
Wee'd make me leave ingreſſing gaine,
Here is for thee I tell the plaine,
no dwelling.
Thus from the rich men of the world,
Poor Conſcience up and down is hurl'd
Like angry Curs at me they snarl'd
and checkt me,
Alas what ſhall I doe, thought I,
Poore Robin muſt I ſtarve and dye?

I that I muſt, if no body
respect me.
At laſt I to my ſelf bethought,
Where I muſt goe: and heaven brought
Me to a place where poore folks wrought,
moſt ſorely.
And there they entertain'd me well,
With whom I ever meane to dwell;
With them to ſtay, it thus befell
though poorly.
Thus people that do labour hard,
Have Robin Conſcience in regard;
For which they ſhall have their reward,
in Heaven.
For all their ſorrow here on Earth,
They ſhall be filled with true mirth,
Crownes ſhall to them at ſecond birth
be given.
And all thoſe Caitiffs that deny'd
To entertain him for their guide,
When they by Conſcience ſhal be tride,
and judged,
Then will they wiſh that they had us'd
Poore Conſcience whom they have refus'd,
Whoſe company they have abus'd,
and grudged.
Thus Robin Conſcience that hath had
Amongſt moſt men but welcome bad,
Ye now hath found to make him glad,
abiding.
Amongſt honeſt folks that have no lands,
But get their living with their hands,
Theſe are his friends that to him ſtands,
and's guiding.
Theſe ſtill keep Conſcience from grim death
And never gainſay what ere he ſaith,
Theſe lead their lives ſo here beneath,

They may ascend from poverty,
To Glory and great Dignity,
Where they shall live and never dye,
while frying
In hell the wicked lye; who would
Not use true Conscience as they should,
This is but for a morall told,
you in it.
Ye that observes, may some-what spye,
That sabours of divinity,
For conscionable folks do I
begin it.
And so I'le bring all to an end,
It can no honest man offend,
For those that Conscience doe defend,
it praises.
And if that any gal'd Jade kick,
The Author hath devis'd a trick
To turn him loose i'th fields to pick
up Daisies.

FINIS.